

The Classical Bulletin

Published monthly except July, August, and September, by St. Louis University. Subscription price: \$1.00 a Year. Entered as second-class matter at St. Louis, Mo., Post-Office.

Vol. XVI

FEBRUARY, 1940

Cicero's Philosophical Treatises

By P. R. COLEMAN-NORTON
Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.

A score of years ago one used to hear the story (probably old then) of the school teacher who read annually with his class *Aeneid* I-VI but who for his own enlightenment had never read *Aeneid* VII-XII. Hence came the query whether there were not also teachers who took their class through Cicero's *Catilinarians* but who never studied Sallust's *Catiline* for illustrative information about the conspiracy and teachers who were content to let their class bring Caesar back from Britain in Book IV of the *Gallie War* but who were never curious to consider for their own interest how Caesar conducted his campaigns in the later books of his *Commentaries*. Time and the College Entrance Examination Board, however, have changed all that.

If we advance to the arena of higher education, we see in some colleges which still offer Latin some space saved in the curriculum (usually of freshman year) for Cicero's *Laelius sive De Amicitia* and *Cato Maior sive De Senectute*.¹ But how many college teachers of Cicero's *Laelius* and *Cato Maior* have read Cicero's other philosophical treatises? Doubtless they excuse themselves on the ground that to understand and to interpret the *Laelius* and the *Cato Maior* calls for no extended excursion into the fuller field of Ciceronian philosophy, since these tracts are merely charming essays embodying—so to speak—the *obiter dicta* of Cicero the philosopher on friendship and on senility. But they fail to realize that the *Laelius* and the *Cato Maior* are vital parts of Cicero's grand design to acquaint the Romans with the Greek speculation on the ways which lead to wise and right and happy living.² In support of his scheme Cicero claims that "the readiest mode of imparting a knowledge of the subject [viz., philosophy] in all its departments and branches is to write an exposition of the various methods in their entirety; since it is a striking characteristic of philosophy that its topics all hang together and form a consecutive system; one is seen to be linked to another, and all to be mutually connected and attached."³ This view Cicero confirms in the preface to his *Cato Maior*, where he says: "To me, at any rate, the composition of this book has been so delightful that it has not only wiped away all the annoyances of old age, but has even made it an easy and a happy state. Philosophy, therefore, can never be praised as much as she deserves, since she enables the man who is obedient to her precepts to pass every season of life free from worry."⁴ And from the *Laelius* we learn that Cicero considers friendship a proper topic for philosophic treatment: when Laelius is requested by his sons-in-law to discuss friendship and to give his opinion as to its theory and practice, he consents after this apology: "But who

am I? or what can I have to say? When you suggest is a task for philosophers."⁵

Of the twenty-two treatises on philosophical problems which Cicero composed fourteen have reached us in fragmentary form.⁶ Even without counting the defective works⁷ we have enough of the integral writings which can be read with profit by the teacher of the *Cato Maior* and the *Laelius*. At the outset, however, it must be admitted that three of these treatises have not a wide appeal: the *De Natura Deorum*, the *De Divinatione*, and the *Paradoxa Stoicorum*.

The *De Natura Deorum*, written in 45, is cast in a continuous conversation,⁸ in which C. Aurelius Cotta, Q. Lucilius Balbus, C. Velleius, and Cicero are represented as meeting at Cotta's Roman residence in 77 or 76 to present the theological tenets of the principal post-Aristotelian schools of philosophy: the Epicurean, the Stoic, and the Academic. Book I contains both the exposition of Epicurean theology by Velleius and the Neo-Academic criticism of it by Cotta; Book II supplies the Stoic statement through Balbus; Book III gives the Neo-Academic attack by Cotta on the Stoic standpoint. Cicero's participation is slight. The best English edition is by J. B. Mayor in three volumes (Cambridge 1880-1885).

The *De Divinatione* is also a dialogue, designed to simplify and to extend the *De Natura Deorum* (so Cicero claims in II. 1. 3). Published in 44, its scene is laid at Cicero's Tusculan villa, where Marcus and his brother Quintus in 44 debate the subject of divination. In Book I Quintus presents the Stoic belief in divination and in Book II Marcus attacks it with the Neo-Academic arguments against the theory and the practice of divination. The best English edition is by A. S. Pease, printed in the *University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* VI (1920) 161-500 and VIII (1923) 155-474.

The *Paradoxa Stoicorum* seems to have been composed in the interval between 53 and 46, for internal evidence points to parts written within this period. This *parvum opusculum* (as Cicero calls it in his preface) is a philosophical *jeu d'esprit* turned into oratorical form and probably published *ad usum oratorum*. In familiar language Cicero canvasses six favorite paradoxes of the Stoics, which he supports by popular arguments and illustrates by examples drawn from Roman history. The paradoxes are: (1) moral good is the only good, (2) virtue is self-sufficient for a happy life, (3) good and evil admit of no degrees, (4) all fools are mad, (5) all wise men are free and all fools are slaves, (6) the wise man alone is rich. Apart from these propositions being simply philosophical quibbles and the buttressing arguments being merely logomachical if not palpably illogical, the illustrations offer means of attack, latent as well as

open, upon M. Licinius Crassus Dives, L. Licinius Lucullus, Q. Hortensius Hortalus, and P. Clodius Pulcher. There is no good English edition; the best text is that provided by O. Plasberg, who appends an ample *apparatus* (Leipzig 1908).

But when we turn to the *Tusculanae Disputationes*, the *De Finibus*, and the *De Officiis*, we occupy an impregnable position in urging their claims upon the teacher of the *Laelius* and the *Cato Maior*.

The *Tusculanae Disputationes*, though dedicated (as so many of Cicero's writings are) to M. Iunius Brutus, are addressed to the general reader and are adapted for universal edification. Book I dispels the fear of death, Book II discusses the endurance of pain, Book III delineates the alleviation of mental distress, Book IV describes certain additional disorders of the soul, Book V declares the self-sufficiency of virtue for a happy life. Of these Books I and V have proved to be the most interesting to the average undergraduate. Cicero composed the *Tusculans* in 45-44 and considered them not so much as instructing philosophers as elevating all men—especially young men of noble instincts—by inspiring their hearts and by imparting the secret of living well and happily. The scene is set at Cicero's Tusculan villa, the time is 46, and the talk takes a period of five days to traverse the topics treated. Though several persons are present (I. 4. 7-8, II. 3. 9, III. 3. 7, IV. 4. 7, V. 4. 11, etc.), we do not know who they are. Nor do we know who are the interlocutors *A* and *M*, which letters seem not to have been in the original text but to have been inserted by a copyist. Of various interpretations *A* for *Auditor* and *M* for *Magister* have won general support. The best English edition is in two volumes by T. W. Dougan and R. M. Henry (Cambridge 1905-1934).

The *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* contains Cicero's criticism of the ethical theories held by the three Hellenistic schools most prominent in his generation: the Epicurean, the Stoic, and the Academic. The common concession that the *De Finibus* is the most elaborate of Cicero's philosophical works has served to secure fewer readers of it than of his less technical and more popular writings on moral subjects. Yet here we have "the only systematic account surviving from antiquity of those rules of life which divided the allegiance of thoughtful men during the centuries when the old religions had lost their hold and Christianity had not yet emerged."⁹ Thus this treatise is important to the student of philosophy; and for the ordinary student it may be said that the timeliness of its topics is still pertinent. In this work, which was written in 45, Cicero is concerned with various views on the chief good and the chief evil. The dialogue is divided into three separate sections, each division in one day dealing with an ethical system: Book I expounding Epicurean ethics and Book II condemning these from the Stoic standpoint, Book III exhibiting Stoic ethics and Book IV confounding these from the Neo-Academic viewpoint, Book V explaining views held in common by the early Academics and Aristotelians and confuting these from the Stoic system. In Books I and II the scene is Cicero's Cumaeon country-house, the year is 50, and the speakers are L. Manlius Torquatus, C. Valerius Triarius (who has a minor part), and Cicero.

In Books III and IV the debaters are M. Porcius Cato Minor and Cicero, the year is 52, and the location is the Tusculan villa of L. Licinius Lucullus. In Book V the year is 79, the place is the Athenian Academy, and the interlocutors are M. Pupius Piso Calpurnianus, T. Pomponius Atticus, L. Tullius Cicero, Q. Tullius Cicero, and Cicero. The only complete English edition, based largely upon Madvig's *magnum opus* (3rd and last ed., Copenhagen 1876), is that of W. M. L. Hutchinson (London 1909).¹⁰

But if one should select which of Cicero's complete philosophical works is most likely to repay reading by the teacher of the *Cato Maior* and the *Laelius*, the choice would doubtlessly be cast upon the *De Officiis*, which is probably "the first classical book to be issued from a printing press."¹¹ This treatise on moral duties is addressed to Cicero's son, Marcus, then a youth of twenty-one and resident at Athens, where he was attending the lectures of Cratippus, the Peripatetic scholar, and living beyond the generous allowance given him by his father. The *De Officiis*, which Cicero considered a *magnum munus* to his son,¹² consists of three books, which book by book treat the topics of moral rectitude (*honestum*), expediency (*utile*), and the conflict between these (*cum pugnare videtur cum honesto id, quod videtur esse utile*). Writing in 44 from the Stoic point of view and basing his composition largely upon a similar work of Panaetius (whose influence on Roman Stoicism can not be overestimated), Cicero conceived this contribution to the subject of moral duties as having the widest practical application. "For no phase of life," he claims, "whether public or private, whether in business or in the home, whether one is working on what concerns oneself alone or dealing with another, can be without its moral duty; on the discharge of such duties depends all that is morally right and on their neglect all that is morally wrong in life."¹³ Probably the best tribute in English to the *De Officiis* is in the preface which Sir Roger l'Estrange wrote (1680) for his translation of this treatise: "To give you the sum of it in a few words, it is a manual of precepts for the government of ourselves in all the offices, actions, and conditions of human life, and tending not only to the comfort of men in society, but to the conducting of particulars also into a state of felicity and virtue. It is a lesson that serves us from the very cradle to the grave. It teaches us what we owe to mankind, to our country, to our parents, to our friends, to ourselves; what we are to do as children, what as men, what as citizens. It sets and it keeps right in all the duties of prudence, moderation, resolution, and justice. It forms our manners, purges our affections, enlightens our understandings, and leads us through the knowledge and the love of virtue to the practice and habit of it." It was this treatise that Frederick the Great termed "the best work on ethics which has been or will be written."¹⁴ The best English edition as well as "one of the most complete commentaries extant of a treatise of Cicero" is by H. A. Holden (8th ed., Cambridge 1899).

These observations are offered with the object of opening a wider vista for our teachers of those philosophical works of Cicero which sometimes find a place—and a

paltry one at that—in the undergraduate curriculum. It has long been known that after preparatory school work in Cicero's *Orations* the average student who reads Latin in college immediately welcomes a change, if he continues work in Cicero. What fields, then, are open to him? Despite Plutarch's profession that Cicero was the premier poet of Rome (*Cic.* 2. 3), no one perhaps would seriously consider reading with his class what remains of Cicero's poetry, though we now have an excellent English edition of his verse by W. W. Ewbank (London 1933). Cicero's essays on rhetoric appeal rightly only to the advanced student who specializes in Latin and are seldom seen outside post-graduate studies, if even there they are found. Many teachers think that the lack of historical background on the part of their students as well as the intricacies of that background adversely affect the attempt to interpret Cicero's correspondence, save in occasional instances where chiefly the non-political letters may be used as illustrative material in other courses. We are, then, with the possible exception of the *Letters*, left with Cicero's philosophical writings, of which the *Laelius* and the *Cato Maior* are usually read to the exclusion of the *De Finibus*, the *Tusculanae Disputationes*, and the *De Officiis*, which (especially the last) have no less a universal appeal.

¹ The former is more frequently found than the latter, since there seems to be a prejudice against bringing young minds into contact with the problems of old age. And yet many adolescents might profit—even without benefit of whatever forms of "social security" may be available to them in later years—by learning how Cato gloried in "the gift of growing old gracefully" (which Tenney Frank so alliteratively denied to Marius).

² Cicero calls attention again and again in his treatises to his reasons for and purposes in composing his philosophical encyclopedia, the articles of which he outlines (with some omissions) in *Div. II.* 1. 1-4. The principal passages presenting his plans are: *Acad. I.* 3. 9-12; *Nat. Deor. I.* 3. 6-4. 9; *Tusc. Disp. I.* 1. 1-4. 8, *II.* 1. 1-3. 9; *Fin. I.* 1. 1-4. 12; *Off. I.* 1. 1-2. 5, *II.* 1. 1-2. 8, *III.* 1. 1-2. 6; *Div. II.* 1. 1-2. 7.

Still unsurpassed is the admirable account of Cicero's aim in writing his philosophical works and of their character, which is given by J. S. Reid, the eminent English editor of some of Cicero's philosophical treatises, in his introduction to Cicero's *Academica*, pp. 20-28 (London 1885).

³ *Nat. Deor. I.* 4. 9 (Rackham's translation in the Loeb Library).

⁴ *Op. cit.* 1. 2 (Falconer's translation in the Loeb Library). In 1. 3 Cicero cites Aristo Cius, the Peripatetic, as the author of a tract on old age.

⁵ *Op. cit.* 5. 17 (Falconer's translation in the Loeb Library). Other references to philosophers who furnish precepts on friendship occur in 7. 24 (Empedocles); 9. 30, 13. 48 (Stoics); 9. 32, 13. 46, 14. 51, 15. 52 (Cyrenaics or Epicureans); 19. 67 (Aristotle); 22. 85 (Theophrastus); 23. 88 (Archytas).

Moreover, Plato's *Lysis* takes this theme, Aristotle assigns Books VIII-IX of his *Nicomachean Ethics* to it, and Diogenes Laertius lists among the treatises of Theophrastus a tripartite tome on friendship (*Vit. Philos.* V. 2. 45), which Aulus Gellius guesses Cicero read when at work on the *Laelius* (*Noc. Att. I.* 3. 10-11).

⁶ Not usually included among his philosophical productions are Cicero's *Cato Minor* (his *laudatio* of M. Porcius Cato Minor) or his seven works on rhetoric or his hexameter versions of Aratus' poems (the *Phaenomena* and the *Prognostica*).

⁷ Four of the fourteen, nevertheless, are sufficiently intact to invite inspection. For the general reader the most interesting of these is the *De Re Publica* (the most original treatise in Cicero's philosophical library), which takes for its main theme the ideal State and which concludes with the celebrated *Somnium Scipionis*, wherein is shown the reward of the ideal statesman. The *De Legibus* illustrates the operation of justice and law in Cicero's ideal State and appeals mainly to the antiquarian. The *De Fato* is a study of the freedom of the human will and is poorly

organized in its present state. The *Academica* discusses the bases of human knowledge and the possibility of achieving certitude.

⁸ However, the original form of the dialogue suggests that three conversations occurred on three successive days, for in *II.* 29. 73 and in *III.* 7. 18 a second and a third day, respectively, are indicated.

⁹ H. Rackham, *Cicero De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, p. vii (London 1914).

¹⁰ The advanced student will be greatly benefited by consulting J. S. Reid's erudite edition of Books I and II (Cambridge 1925), which is a mine of information on Epicurean ethics—the most interesting as well as the most eloquent part of the treatise.

¹¹ So W. Miller, *Cicero De Officiis*, p. xiii (London 1913). Miller explains this thus (*loc. cit.*): "The first edition of the *de Officiis* was from the press of Sweynheim and Pannartz at the Monastery of Subiaco; possibly the edition published by Fust and Schöffer at Mainz is a little older. Both appeared in 1465."

¹² *Op. cit.* *III.* 33. 121. "The *De Officiis* is the noblest present ever made by a parent to a son," wrote C. Kelsall in his *Classical Excursion from Rome to Arpino*, p. 106 (Geneva 1820).

¹³ *Op. cit.* I. 2. 4 (Miller's translation in the Loeb Library).

¹⁴ "... les offices de Cicéron, le meilleur ouvrage de morale, qu'on ait écrit et qu'on écrira" in his *De la littérature allemande*, p. 26 (ed. by L. Geiger, Stuttgart 1883). Two years earlier (1778) in his *Éloge de Voltaire* Frederick also wrote: "... des Offices, peut-être le meilleur ouvrage de morale que nous ayons" (*Oeuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, VII. 62 [ed. by J. D. E. Preuss, Berlin 1847]).

Livy — and Noncombatants in War

In perusing the twenty-ninth chapter of the first book of Livy, one finds a picture, which present-day realities have rendered unhappily recognizable, of the miseries attending noncombatants in war.

The Albans, defeated in battle by Rome's legions, are compelled to surrender their city, and evacuation is imminent for the inhabitants. These latter, speechless from grief and bewildered (*silentium triste ac tacita maestitia . . . defixit omnium animos*), seem unable to comprehend the situation; they stand about, undecided what to take, what to leave, plying each other with questions, and looking at their homes for the last time:

... ut prae metu, quid relinquerent, quid secum ferrent, deficiente consilio rogitantesque alii alios nunc in liminibus starent, nunc errandi domos suas ultimum illud visuri pervagarentur.

When finally enemy horsemen appear and the work of destruction begins on the outskirts of the city, all realize only too well the turn of circumstances, and try frantically to save what they can; but home and the gods are forfeit:

Ut vero iam equitum clamor exire iubentium instabat, iam fragor tectorum quae diruebantur ultimis urbis partibus audiebatur, pulvisque ex distantibus locis ortus velut nube inducta omnia impleverat, raptim quibus quisque poterat elatis, cum larem ac penates tectaque, in quibus natus quisque educatusque esset, relinquentes exirent. . . .

Then begins the procession; refugees, suffering anew their own grief in their neighbor's, they fill the streets, and amid the lamenting, especially of the women, pass by their shrines, now possessed by the invaders:

... iam continens agmen migrantium impleverat vias, et conspectus aliorum mutua miseratione integrabat lacrimas, vocesque etiam miserabiles exaudiebantur mulierum praecipue, cum obsessa ab armatis templa augusta praeterirent ac velut captos relinquent deos.

Thus, in every age, the common people, who have no part in the planning of empires, bear nevertheless the disasters following upon the failure of their leaders.

Fordham University

LAWRENCE A. MANN

The Classical Bulletin

Published monthly except July, August and September by
St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.

Subscription price: \$1.00 a year

Entered as second-class matter, at the post-office at St. Louis,
Mo., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

EDITOR

James A. Kleist, S. J.
St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Francis A. Preuss, S. J. St. Stanislaus Sem'y, Florissant, Mo.
A. A. Jacobsmeyer, S. J. St. Stanislaus Sem'y, Florissant, Mo.
Joseph A. Walsh, S. J. Milford Novitiate, Milford, Ohio
F. A. Sullivan, S. J. St. Andrew-on-Hudson, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
Francis X. Entz, S. J. St. Charles College, Grand Coteau, La.
Chas. J. Walsh, S. J. Sacred Heart Novitiate, Los Gatos, Cal.
Daniel P. Meagher, S. J. Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash.
Carol L. Bernhardt, S. J. Weston College, Weston, Mass.

BUSINESS EDITOR

J. P. Jelinek, S. J. St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.

Vol. XVI

FEBRUARY, 1940

No. 5

Editorial

Writing in *The Clergy Review* for July, 1939, Monsignor John M. T. Barton voices a well-timed complaint when he says that "the Bible, in common with other great literature, has to endure heavy competition at the present day when viewed simply as reading matter." The italics are ours, and we assume that the term "other great literature" is meant to include the Greek and Roman classics. "The issue," the writer goes on to say, "has been excellently stated by the President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in his contribution to the *Hibbert Journal* for April under the heading: 'This uneducated Nation'." The opening words of that article are certainly calculated to arrest attention:

Why are we an uneducated nation and how can we become an educated one? We have compulsory education, magnificent schools, an impressive array of teachers, and an enormous educational budget. Yet most of the passengers in a railway carriage will be reading the *Daily Mirror*; and the *News of the World* has a circulation of between three and four millions.

We do not know whether the reading done "in a railway carriage" is an infallible index of a nation's education; but it is a patent fact that, in the domain of reading, the Bible and other great literature do not keep step with their more attractive rivals. This is a lamentable state of affairs, and we heartily join Monsignor Barton in urging all "to consider how we are to combat a flood of what, for want of a generally accepted less polite word, is styled literature, which is in some part harmless, in great part fatuous, and in a steadily growing proportion thoroughly bad and vicious."

Some of our classical teachers have doubtless felt the acuteness of this problem more keenly than others, and are taking steps to improve the taste of their students for good literature. We shall be glad to hear from them.

The problem of stemming the tide of trashy literature is not an isolated one for classical teachers. Every department in a great school has here a duty to perform. But it is rightly felt that the department of classics

ought to take a prominent part in this campaign. In the Greek and Roman writings we possess an effective means of improving the taste of adolescents for beauty embodied in language. This connection between classics and culture has often been emphasized, but we wonder whether our readers are prepared for so direct an attack on American culture as has recently been made in England. The eminent litterateur Christopher Hollis speaks straight from the shoulder in the closing paragraph of a review of Bernard Wall's *European Note-Book*, published in the *London Tablet* for November 11th, 1939:

Mr. Wall is one of those writers who irritatingly denies the reviewer the pleasures of giving a list of the topics which he has omitted. I had thought that I would be able to give myself the pleasure of saying that he told us nothing of the importance of the Latin language as the binder both of the nations and of the centuries, and then in the last pages of the book I find all this set out with the greatest force and eloquence. It is a point that cannot be too often and too strongly made—a point which is the more important because of the Laodicean indifference to the survival of the classics that one so commonly meets these days in classical schools. More and more, I think that it is neglect of the classics which is the explanation of the strange smallness of American influence over the world's culture today. With a classical education America might be the leading country in the world; without it, whatever her wealth, she will never be culturally one of the world's great Powers, nor will we ever be able to count with certainty on her influence being in favor of stability.

Are we an "uneducated nation"? *Durus est hic sermo!*

We should like to have all our readers share with us the pleasure and profit we derived from reading an article in the September number of *Thought*, entitled "Humanism and Education," by Robert G. North, S. J. In it the author, who is also an esteemed contributor to the *CLASSICAL BULLETIN*, represents appealingly the Platonic ideal of education Christianized. When the classical teacher of the secondary school or undergraduate college sits down and reflects how perfectly his own chosen calling can be made to fit into this attractive ideal and how effectively it can be made to promote it, he will take new courage and inspiration in his noble work of moulding boys and girls to a full humanity by the best of means, the ancient classics.

In spite of the war the Board of Management of *Greece and Rome* "intend to carry on with the publication, at the usual times, unless this is found to be impossible." The number for October 1939, which has just appeared, is full of interest to the classical teacher. The topics discussed in it are: The Topography of Punic Carthage—Virgil and Wordsworth: The Poetry of Romanticism—That Word 'Caput'—Greek Plays in 1939—The Classics in America—How to Live on Nothing a Day.

We quote a significant paragraph from "Greek Plays in 1939":

This year has been noteworthy for the number of Classical plays which have been presented upon the stage, and for those of us who are sometimes asked to justify the pursuit of Classical Studies they are a welcome sign that Classical thought and technique is contributing in the most vital of all ways to modern appreciation. For it is only by constant reinterpretation in each generation that a cultural influence is maintained; and if it is confined to the study it stagnates only too quickly, till it joins the limbo of "dead" literature and art.

The principle here stressed was familiar to the Jesuit

educators of the 17th and 18th centuries. "The Jesuit-Theatre Movement" is not the last chapter in the history of post-Renaissance education.

The Annapolis Plan

Among other more important points [urged by the writer in connection with our Editorial for November] the following features of the Annapolis Plan are to be highly approved:

1. It destroys the departmental system of collegiate education, thus simultaneously restoring unity to the liberal arts course and breaking the domination of professional and specialist scholars.
2. It restores intellectual and humanistic purpose to the arts course. Informational or professional orientation is not to be found at St. John's. The student is definitely the *finis cui* of the Plan.
3. It rejects the lecture system as a classroom technique.
4. It puts first-rate works in place of textbooks. (Thus, the men at St. John's get their logic from the *Organon* of Aristotle, carefully explained according to the method of the *explication de texte*.) The student is thus put in direct contact with great minds.
5. It provides balanced and sound teaching techniques: the *explication de texte* (an excellent modern relic of the *Ratio Studiorum*); the dialectical-discussion seminar (not to be confused with the ordinary graduate seminar); the "little-red-school-house" type of language class, etc.

St. Mary's College
Saint Marys, Kansas

R. E. HENLE, S. J.

It seems to me, the St. John's plan is a well-intentioned effort to rectify something which needs rectification very much in our present college education. In secular colleges there is no consistent and organized *Weltanschauung* at all—and this St. John's hopes to supply. In Catholic colleges there is; but it is too often proposed to the student in pre-organized, pre-digested form, like a catechism, instead of making the student, under competent direction, organize and build it up himself by studying the great classics. This, I believe, is the core of the problem. It is the great fundamental point of difference between the current American system and the honors system at Oxford and Cambridge. At Oxford and Cambridge, however, a *six-year* secondary course in language and literature is *prerequisite*, and at the universities themselves the thing is done in a more feasible way by centering the work around *one* central subject, like the classics of Greece and Rome; these, however, are studied in a large way, including philosophy, history, religion, politics, art, etc.

The St. John's plan errs in trying to include too much altogether, and in not requiring as a necessary basis at least a full high-school course of thorough linguistic and literary discipline.

Florissant, Mo.

FRANCIS A. PREUSS, S. J.

Nihil Interest

Teacher: "Bobby, do you know on which side your bread is buttered?" Bobby: "It doesn't matter; I always eat both sides." Magistra: "Seisne, Robertule, ab utra parte panis tuus sit butyro illitus?" Robertulus: "Nihil interest; utramque semper comedo."

Father: "Why is it, Johnny, that you are always at the bottom of the class?" Johnny: "It doesn't make any difference, daddy; they teach the same things at both ends."

Pater: "Cur tu semper infimum classis locum occupas?" Filiolus: "Nihil, pater, interest; idem docetur utrimque."

Xenophon as a Writer of Speeches

BY WILLIAM M. A. GRIMALDI, S. J.
Woodstock College

From our school days we all remember Xenophon as an historian, the author of the *Anabasis*, which narrates the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. It did not, perhaps, strike us at the time that he was also an "orator," at least in the sense that the speeches embodied in his narrative showed rhetorical training. Even scholars like Blass and Jebb were by no means impressed by Xenophon's rhetorical abilities. It is little to the point to say that he was "not a trained orator," for the use of the term will depend on what one means by it. It must be insisted, however, that the speeches strewn up and down the *Anabasis* prove him to have been a conscious artist. No mere "natural eloquence" could have composed them, and they are by no means of "the rough and ready kind."¹ In brief, Xenophon was a true Attic orator even though his name does not appear in the canon. What counts in this appraisal is his ability to mold plain words and rhetorical figures into purposeful, spirited speech. The limits of this paper allow only one of the shorter speeches to be examined in detail—Clearchus' address to Tissaphernes (II 5.3-15). This, it will be seen, is the product of studied, careful composition, and shows that Xenophon was a writer trained in the schools.

The quality that immediately strikes us in reading this speech is its clever disposition and suggestive argumentation. Clearchus found himself in delicate and dangerous circumstances, stranded in Media, surrounded by a hostile people with his only source of assistance threatening to rupture because of mutual distrust. It devolved upon him to ease the tension. And how did he attempt it? First, in characteristically Greek manner, he appeals to the oaths that had been taken, as infallible motives of Greek fidelity. Then, frankly admitting the Greek need of Persian assistance he states the inanity of any rash act on the part of the Greeks. Not satisfied, however, with the effect this reasoning might have upon Tissaphernes, he supplements it with a subtle hint that the Persians were no less in need of the Greek host if they hoped to rid themselves of the Mysians, Pisidians, and Egyptians, who were a perennial source of discomfort to them.

This, then, is the broad outline of the way in which the argumentation proceeds. An analysis of the speech will show its rhetorical features.²

- A. The *Introduction* (n. 3) from the very outset points out the seriousness of the situation by a well-chosen synonymia, ὅρκους γεγενημένους καὶ δεξιάς δεδομένους (line 29).
- B. *Narration* (4-6). The prominent note struck here is that of distrust existing between the Greeks and the Persians, ἀπιστίαν (6), which is repeated with emphasizing precision in ἀπιστεῖς (12) and ἀπιστεῖν (n. 15, line 24), as well as paraphrased throughout (as by ὑποψίας, 7). Before the fact is boldly stated, however, it has been prepared for by a kuklos, φυλαττόμενον—ἀντιφυλαττόμεθα (1-2). Nor can we overlook the exact pariosis in τοὺς μὲν ἐκ διαβολῆς, τοὺς δὲ καὶ ὑποψίας (7), re-

echoed for rhythmic effects at the end of the sentence: τοὺς οὐτε μέλλοντας οὐτ' ἂν βουλομένους (9-10). The paronomasia in ἀγνωμοσύνας νομίζων (11) is a piece of strong Spartan bluntness.

- C. *Body of the Speech* (7-14). Here Clearchus reiterates and amplifies his first argument based on the oaths to the gods, and then builds up a fine contrast on the need of mutual assistance as a further argument against distrust of one another. The three main divisions are: 1, their oaths to the gods; 2, the Greek need of assistance; 3, the Persian need of the Greeks. οὐτ' ἀπὸ ποίου . . . (16), down to οὐθ' ὅπως . . . (17), is an example of balance with fine amplification, lacking, however, any climactic order. Its purpose is to lend solemnity to the passage on the oaths. It is followed by a fine *traductio*: πάντη, πάντα, πάντων (18-19), with mounting emphasis on each word. Xenophon develops each point of the argumentation with care. The passage from σὺν μὲν γάρ (22) to φοβερώτατον δ' ἔρημιά (26) shows his rhetoric at its best. The diction as such appears to be nothing but what the soldier Clearchus would use, but Xenophon draws from it great power by the selection and arrangement of details. The antithesis is manifest at a first glance; but subtler figures of speech should not be overlooked. A strong antithesis is expressed in σὺν μὲν γάρ σοί (22) . . . ἄνευ δὲ σοῦ (24), which brings out the Greeks' need of help. The comparatio in πᾶσα εὐπορος, πᾶς διαβατός (23) is made more pleasant by paromoiosis and similiter cadens. We note also the homoioteleuton in ἀπορία (24) and ἔρημιά (26). Then there is the rhetorical triad πᾶσα ὁδός (24), πᾶς ποταμός (25), πᾶς ὄχλος (26), re-emphasized by the strong epanastrophe φοβερός, φοβερώτατον (26). The total effect of these figures, which would not escape a trained Greek ear, is, of course, to enhance Clearchus' ardent appeal, by setting forth the utter loss of the Greeks without Tissaphernes. Passing over other rhetorical effects, we cannot help advert- ing to the *traductio* in σωθέντες ὑπὸ σοῦ σοὶ ἂν ἔχοιμεν δικαίως (n. 14, line 22) with the admirable juxtaposition of the two pronouns.

- D. *Peroration*. (15). Very much like the typical Lysian peroration, Clearchus' closing words are quite simple and devoid of emotion. He merely states that for the reasons he has advanced he desires Tissaphernes' cooperation in discovering the informer.

If Blass and Jebb were rather scanty in their recognition of any rhetorical ability in Xenophon, it is a pleasure to note that E. Norden (*Antike Kunstprosa* I 101-102) is more just in assigning Xenophon the place that belongs to him in the history of artistic prose. He finds in his writings a fair use "of all the resources of contemporary rhetoric," but is careful also to point out "his instinctive feeling for moderation," that genuinely Athenian φιλοκαλία. No doubt, it was this moderate, to ordinary Greek ears unobtrusive, application of rhetorical means that earned Xenophon the appellation of the "Attic Bee."³ His style in the μηδὲν ἄγαν transferred to the written page.

¹ For Jebb's estimate of Xenophon, see his *Attic Orators from Antiphon to Isaeus*, Macmillan (London 1876), II 430.

² All references are to the Oxford text edited by Marchant.

³ There is a penetrating study of Xenophon's rhetoric in H. Schacht, *De Xenophontis studiis rhetoricis*, Berlin 1890. Further literature on the subject will be found in Norden, l. c., 103.

Why Study Greek?

BY CATHERINE BRADSHAW

The trek of innumerable boys and girls, young men and women, most of them between the ages of five or six and the upper twenties, has begun. In thousands of schools, colleges, and universities men and women are gnawing pens and pulling hair in an almost futile attempt to register these students in suitable classes. From the student's point of view and, naturally, from their parents' point of view the important question has become: Is this course going to help me earn a living? If so, to what extent? In other words, the various courses are weighed in the balance against dollars and cents—and quite naturally, since the securing of bread and butter has assumed the proportions of the payment of the national debt, and that person would indeed be mad who ignored the exigencies of the question.

Unfortunately, only by the greatest stretch of imagination, and even then only in very rare cases, can we admit that the study of Greek will improve the family budget—(I speak with experience as an unemployed Greek teacher). However, if we remember that not by bread alone does man live, we might find some justification for the continuance of Greek in our schools.

The most difficult obstacle a teacher of Greek must overcome before he can have any hope of succeeding in his teaching is fear of the difficulty of the language. The time-worn phrase "It's Greek to me" is heard innumerable times throughout a day and has formed a fear of Greek, almost innate, in those who are unacquainted with the language. Admittedly, Greek is not a "snap course," but neither is Mathematics, or Chemistry, or Psychology, or English. Yet every day students enroll in these courses without the slightest trace of fear. Suggest, however, that they spend a year in close contact with Greek, and they are practically paralyzed by fear. The most difficult thing about the Greek language is the unfamiliarity of the alphabet. When the student becomes acquainted with the letters and easily recognizes them—and this process is very short—the chief difficulty is past. From then the procedure is simply that of any other language. No one would sleep through a French class for a semester, and then expect to pass an examination in the course. Naturally, they cannot expect to sleep through Greek. In itself the Greek language is very logical—much more so, in fact, than many other languages—and very precise in expression. Even a short period of study of the language will awaken in the student a consciousness of words and of the desirability of exactitude. The logic of the language, of the forms, develops a subsequent clarity of thought in the student; no person can spend time studying a language which shapes itself for the greater part with mathematical precision, and not show some effects of that logic. In other words, the study of Greek disciplines the mind

—despite the fact that discipline and order along with justice seem to be outmoded ideals!

Along with this angle regarding the study of Greek goes that of understanding our own language more clearly. Many English words are built on Greek words. A brief study of Greek does not enable us to dispense with a dictionary entirely, but it does enable us to understand many words which we would ordinarily understand only by consulting a dictionary. A large percentage of medical terms, for example, is Greek in derivation. But we need not go to the specialized vocabulary of any profession in order to put our knowledge of Greek, however slight it may be, to use. Words which we use every day are frequently of Greek origin: stenography, strategy, ephemeral, psychology, philosophy, microphone, acrobat, asphyxiate—to mention a few. At the same time that the student is learning to understand his own language more clearly, he has learned many new English words, and has not only learned to use them with familiarity and fluency, but, knowing their root meaning, has learned to use them with exactitude.

These are the most tangible advantages derived from a study of Greek. But there is another advantage, intangible and perhaps idealistic, yet nevertheless an advantage which for its very idealism should be cultivated. That is the contact with the beautiful. The Greek grammar and the few pages of Xenophon's *Anabasis* are the extent of the ordinary student's knowledge of Greek, and unfortunately he gains a vague impression that the Greek language consists of only these two things, grammar and the *Anabasis*—incidentally ignoring the fact that the *Anabasis* is our first news report from the front line trenches. The grammar, however, is the tool by which the student may, if he so wishes, unlock the door to a vast treasure of beauty and fascination. The earliest literary monuments, not only of Greece but of all Europe, are the Homeric poems, the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, written between 1000 and 800 B. C. and describing in lines of unusual beauty a civilization practically contemporaneous with the Minoan Age and reaching its peak from about 2000 to 1200 B. C. Schliemann and Dörpfeld laid bare at Tiryns, Mycenae, and Troy the archaeological remains of the period. The poems are, of course, translated, but in the English translation entire phrases and clauses are needed to portray what a single Greek word paints with magnificent boldness, and the rhythmic majesty of the original cannot be retained in a translation which of necessity must add much in the way of phrases. Tracing down through the ages we find among the lyric poets of Greece such names as Mimnermus, who expressed for the first time in literature that profound discouragement with life which all of us feel at one time or another. Mimnermus, who served as an inspiration to the Alexandrian as well as to the Roman elegists, was haunted by fear of old age, and this fear expresses itself in the fragment of one of his Odes: "We are like the leaves that grow in the season of spring flowers, when on a sudden they increase in the sun's rays. Like them we rejoice for a moment in the flowers of youth, not knowing what the gods have in store, good or ill. But the black Fates are there, bringing for one man the doom of grievous old age, for another the doom of

death." There is Alcaeus of Lesbos, who is credited with the development of the Alcaic strophe about the year 600 B. C., Sappho, the greatest woman poet in the history of the world, the woman who in the shining city of Mytilene founded the first woman's club, who describes her own daughter's beauty as that of golden flowers, who writes of apples shining as silver balls in the moonlight, whose exquisite wedding songs with such passages,

Like the wild hyacinth flower on the hillside
Which the feet of the shepherds forever tear
Till the purple blossom is trodden in earth,

were the models for Catullus. There is Pindar, whose odes on the victories of the various Greek games tell the grandeur of a civilization and culture doomed to decadence and ruin. These are but four of dozens of authors whose writing fills the pages of Greek poetry, each bit more exquisite than the preceding.

In drama, as in the great Elizabethan period, three men stand forth: Aeschylus, who traces the blossoming of the dark flower of destiny from generation to generation, from the original curse to the final atonement of that curse; whose mighty Prometheus is greeted by all the Byrons and Shelleys in the world as the champion of suppressed mankind and the opposer of tyranny; Aeschylus, in whose *Agamemnon* the forces of passion and murder and revenge stalk openly and forcefully. Sophocles, one of the few Athenians who never bore Athens a grudge or went into exile, has produced dramas as exquisite as a Beethoven Sonata or a work of Carraran marble. His plays, of which only seven are extant, are built around the hero who unconscious of his doom is nevertheless forced to fulfill it, and the *Oedipus Tyrannus* was considered by Aristotle the masterpiece of Greek drama. Finally Euripides, writing his tragedies with his tongue in his cheek, but whose power of description is so vividly modern that we forget the centuries between our era and his. Aristophanes, whose comedies are frequently revived on the modern stage, has written among his satire many lines of beauty and grandeur,—as in his *Birds*,

It was Chaos and Night at the first, and the blackness of
darkness and Hell's broad border,
Earth was not, nor air, neither heaven; when in depths of
the womb of the dark without order
First thing first-born of the black-plumed Night was
wind-egg hatched in her bosom,
Whence timely with seasons revolving again sweet Love
burst out as a blossom,
Gold wings glittering forth of his back, like whirlwinds
gustily turning.

Among the historians are Herodotus and Thucydides, whose very words throb with Greek ideals of patriotism and freedom, with petty intrigues and plots. We trace our philosophies to the philosophers of Greece—Aristotle, Plato, Epicurus—and even beyond them we find Heraclitus and laughing Democritus. No fairy tale is as fascinating as the stories of the travels of Odysseus or the hardships endured in the Trojan War, as the Idyls of Theocritus which bring before our eyes the folklore and superstition of a people to whom every dawn was a mysterious act. No tale of political intrigue can hold the interest as the pages of Isocrates, or Lysias, or Demosthenes. We enter into another world, the world of Thermopylae, Salamis, Marathon, the world of Prax-

iteles, Phidias, and Myron, of the Parthenon and of violet-crowned Athens, of Alcibiades, of the far-reaching colonial policy of the Greek city-states of the 8th century B. C., which saw the foundation in Italy of Cumae, Naples, Taormina, Agrigentum, Syracuse.

Why study Greek? Why read the Book of Ruth or the Gospel of Saint John? Why bother with Shakespeare or Milton? Why spend time before a Michelangelo, a Giotto, a da Vinci, a Canova? Why stand in awe and admiration before San Marco or Saint Sophia? Because Greek, as the da Vinci, as the Giotto, as Milton, as Saint Sophia, is beauty, and the human soul has need of beauty and truth.

"Aristotelian Papers"

In his *Aristotelian Papers*¹ Professor Lane Cooper presents virtually all the scattered papers he contributed between 1907 and 1938 to the elucidation of Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*. A scholar whose lifetime has been preoccupied with a particular subject is fortunate in being allowed to collect his writings and give them the final stamp by which he wishes to be rated and remembered. "I have tended," says the author, "in revision to omit from each [paper] what had the air of local and temporary interest at an earlier date. Again, where I could do so without reconstructing any article as a whole, I have tried to make each one of them a little better than it was, and have freely improved all of them, or certainly have attempted it, in small details."

Aristotelian Papers deals largely in illustrations, from ancient and modern sources, of Aristotle's meaning at certain doubtful points, and is therefore a welcome supplement—we should rather say, a companion volume—to the author's amplified translations of the *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*. His personal manner is conspicuous throughout: his treatment is fresh, independent, stimulating; his view is well supported by proofs—Aristotle would say, by facts. These traits are familiar to those acquainted with his work, but the special charm of this volume lies deeper. As Plato is, or ought to be, "Our Plato,"² so *Aristotelian Papers* indicates ways in which Aristotle is, or might become, *our* Aristotle.

There are eight articles in this volume (Some Wordsworthian Similes—The Fifth Form of 'Discovery' in the *Poetics* of Aristotle—A Pun in the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle—The Climax—Haemon and Jocasta Advising—The *Rhetoric* of Aristotle and its Relation to the *Poetics*—Galileo and Scientific History—The Verbal 'Ornament') and ten reviews (The Villain as 'Hero'—Gudeman's Translation of the *Poetics*—The Oxford Translation of Aristotle, *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*—Ross on Aristotle—Smyth on Aeschylus—Stocks' 'Aristotelianism'—Burnet on Aristotle—Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Mr. Lowes—The *Poetics* in the Loeb Classical Library—Gudeman's Edition of the *Poetics*).

Students are generally struck by Aristotle's statement that the use of metaphor "is the one thing one poet cannot learn from another" (*Poetics*, end of chapter 22, and *Rhetoric*, middle of III 2). Taking this striking dictum³ for his text, Professor Cooper shows that Wordsworth's remarks to Coleridge (*Prelude* 2.382-6) express

the same conviction: it is a mark of genius to be able—"to see hidden yet essential resemblance and coherence in objects that supply figures of speech." In his paper called Some Wordsworthian Similes he presents from the wealth of Wordsworth's imagery "a number of those figures in which, as it seems to me, his originality, and boldness of vision, and if they are contemplated steadily, his justice of vision also, are most strikingly exemplified."

It is not, then, on account of a superficial interest or peculiarity attaching to Wordsworth's similes that I have brought some of them together for inspection, but rather on account of their deep underlying truth—truth to their author and to the constitution of things as he saw it. And they well illustrate the correctness of Aristotle's observation regarding the native insight of a poet. At first blush a few of them may appear to be literary abortions, crude excrescences. But if it be generally admitted that Wordsworth saw more profoundly into nature than any other English poet of his era, we may be unsafe in rejecting even the least expected of his comparisons—for example,

Calm is all nature as a resting wheel

—without a considerable pause for reflection. To the passive mind they may now and then be a stumbling-block, and to the unsympathetic, foolishness. Their truth and justice become apparent when they are dwelt upon with active sympathy by a mind that through habit is less inclined to condemn than to admire.

¹ Cornell University Press; Ithaca, 1939. Price \$2.50.

² See the author's "Our Plato" in THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN, Vol. XVI, January, 1939.

³ We find, by the way, the same truth hinted at by Emerson in his *Nature* (section on "Language": "A man's power to connect his thought with its proper symbol . . .") and in *Self-Reliance* ("Insist on yourself; never imitate . . . There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias . . .").

O Fons Bandusiae¹

By EDWARD W. McNERNEY, S. J.
Milford Novitiate, Milford, Ohio

O crystalline spring of Bandusia, I sing
Sweetest wines are thy due and choice garlands of spring;
On the morrow a kid,
Pick of my flock, unblemished, I'll bring:

A capering kid, whose horn-budding fore
Ordains him for prowess in love and in war;
But in vain, for to-morrow
Red flows thy torrent, dyed with his gore.

In the torrid heat of the Dog Star's reign,
Refreshingly cool do thy waters remain,
Soothing and cooling
Wain-weary ox and flocks of the plain.

Undying the fame my song shall bestow
On the shade-giving oak and the grotto below,
Whence tumbling and gushing,
Laughing and bubbling thy waters o'erflow.

¹ This version took first place in a local Horace-Translation contest.

"For Fear of Bellowing"

In reading the quotation from a letter of Father Hopkins quoted in the June CLASSICAL BULLETIN, I was reminded of the words which Ovid uses in the first book of the *Metamorphoses* in describing the feelings of Io as she recovered her original form—

" . . . metuitque loqui, ne more iuvencae mugiat."
("Nor dares to speake aloud, lest she should heare
Herselfe to low."—Sandys' Translation)

Reade Park
South Australia

J. P. GILES
Unley High School

n

r
s
k
s

es
ol